

2009 NCLA Legislative Agenda

Entering its 18th legislative session, the Northern Colorado Legislative Alliance, the joint public policy advocacy effort of the Fort Collins, Greeley and Loveland Chambers of Commerce and the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation, has determined its Legislative Agenda for the 2009 Legislative Session.

Since the NCLA's inception in 1992, the Legislative Agenda has evolved from year to year as a reflection of the Northern Colorado business community's top concerns and the changing dynamics of the business and political climate.

Colorado's Business Climate

In 2009, Colorado is at an economic crossroads. With national economic indicators signaling a recession and Colorado's economy faltering, will Colorado respond to correct the current direction or miss the mark in positioning Colorado for the rebound?

Public policy decisions are integral to the direction Colorado's economy will take. The NCLA will be the voice to assure Colorado is proactive in its economic efforts and well-positioned for the future.

The Northern Colorado Legislative Alliance will focus its 2009 Legislative Agenda upon encouraging Colorado to choose the path that assures growth and diversity of all sectors of Colorado's economy. The NCLA's decision-making process has been and will continue to be guided by the philosophy of encouraging and enhancing a business environment that is balanced and proactive.

Legislative Agenda

Following is a glance at the NCLA's 2009 Legislative Agenda. Bolded items constitute NCLA Priorities within our Legislative Agenda. Find full details on the NCLA's agenda at www.NCLAonline.net.

Job Creation, Job Preservation and Workforce Issues

- **Immediately secure maximum federal funds for programmed infrastructure and capital construction funding to keep the construction and related industries**

viable for the benefit of the broader Colorado economy

- **Promote and support utilization of Northern Colorado Workforce Initiative as a model pilot program for the state**
- **Proactively promote and support an angel investor tax credit**
- Support measures to encourage job creation, including implementing job creation tax credits, expanding enterprise zones, lifting regulatory burdens and phasing out the business personal property tax
- Support measures to improve tax and regulatory environment
- Support the Colorado Labor Peace Act
- Oppose any effort to impose additional surcharges, fees, or trigger points for the UI Fund upon business
- Protect current status of workers' compensation and tort systems
- Oppose state and federal measures that unduly shift the delicate balance between employer and employee
- Oppose proposed federal "card check" legislation
- Oppose efforts to undermine the intent behind the CSAP program

Transportation

- **Support prioritization of transportation as a funding and economic priority of the state**
- **Encourage Colorado to aggressively lobby the federal government for a meaningful and significant share of the federal economic stimulus package**
- **Assure there is a balance between funding highway, road and bridge needs while setting the stage for forward-thinking transportation options for the future**
- **Advocate for maximum allocation of existing resources and any new dollars secured for statewide transportation for the North Front Range region**

- **Support regional efforts to expedite regional transportation challenges**
- Support a full range of reasonable options to fund the \$1.5 billion of annual needs determined by the Governor's Panel on Transportation Infrastructure and Finance
- Oppose efforts to undermine the integrity and full allocation of Senate Bill 97-1 and House Bill 02-1310 as the economy rebounds
- Oppose efforts to reduce or eliminate the sales tax on aviation jet fuel which funds general aviation infrastructure in Colorado

Energy

- **Support legislative efforts that encourage economic growth in the new and traditional energy economy**
- **Support initiatives of the Clean Energy Cluster that enhance opportunities for Northern Colorado businesses to thrive in this new sector**
- Support incentives for energy efficiency, conservation and new conservation technologies when economically feasible
- Oppose initiatives that unnecessarily promote certain sectors of the Colorado energy economy at the detriment of other important sectors of the economy
- Oppose initiatives that deny the state new or additional revenue from Colorado's natural resources due to undue environmental regulations or restrictions

Health Care

- **Dissuade and oppose Colorado-specific reforms that establish Colorado as an island in the health care reform arena**
- **Support efforts to reduce overall health care costs**
- **Oppose mandates for specific health care services**
- Oppose efforts to mandate the provision of employee health care coverage by business

- Support minimizing health insurance cost increases to business and improving accessibility to care
- Support initiatives that increase competition within the health care provider and insurance marketplace
- Oppose measures that place an undue burden for addressing the state's uninsured on business

Water

- **Oppose the transfer of base water supplies out of the Northern Colorado region in any way that would negatively impact the regional economy**
- **Support all efforts related to, and swift approval of, ongoing important and essential water projects in the Northern Colorado region including the Northern Integrated Supply Project, Halligan-Seaman Reservoir Project and Windy Gap Firing Project**
- Support efforts to conserve, capture and retain all water to which Colorado is entitled for the beneficial use by Coloradans
- In the administration of water quality standards, support the use of scientifically-based, proven, best management practices

Importance of the Region to the State of Colorado

The economy of the Northern Colorado region is an integral component of Colorado's larger economy. From the agriculture sector and higher education to renewable energy and high tech sectors, from an active entrepreneurial spirit to flourishing corporate headquarters, Northern Colorado's thriving economic sectors enhance economic success for the state.

As the leading regional business organization in Northern Colorado, the NCLA will continue to serve as the voice for the regional economy in the public policy arena. The NCLA will collaborate with organizations and entities in Northern Colorado to ensure the region receives its fair share of funding and consideration.

Want More Information?

Fill out the following form to receive more information and updates about legislative issues important to Northern Colorado businesses.

Name: _____

Business: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Chamber/EDC Affiliation(s):

Specific Areas of Interest (if any):

Return completed form to:
NCLA
c/o Capitol Solutions
1701 Wynkoop Street, Suite 308
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 837-1714 Phone
(303) 831-6219 Fax
shsolin@capitol-solutions.com
www.NCLAonline.net

17 Years of Accomplishments

The NCLA is very proud of its successes and accomplishments over the last 17 years. A brief list of areas where we have helped influence positive outcomes for Northern Colorado businesses follows.

On Tax Policy...

- Passed \$2,500 Personal Property Tax Exemption
- Reduced Colorado corporate income tax rate
- Secured \$100 million BPPT refund

On Transportation...

- Passed \$20 billion long-term funding package
- Helped secure and protect \$510 million for transportation for 2007-08

On Education...

- Passed measure to give schools more control over hiring, budgets and curricula
- Directed excess federal mineral lease dollars to capital construction
- Achieved more equitable state funding for Northern Colorado school districts

On Labor...

- Prohibited public employees from striking
- Kept the ceiling on non-economic damages in medical malpractice cases
- Secured a permanent 20% unemployment insurance tax credit for business
- Helped veto HB 1072 that would have made it easier for unions to organize

On Health Care...

- Defeated "Wal-Mart" bills against requiring employers to spend a percent of wages on health insurance

On Economic Development & Growth...

- Achieved Major Enterprise Zone reform
- Boosted business personal property tax exemption from \$2,500 to \$7,000 and tied it to inflation
- Passed and expanded Bioscience Discovery Education Grant Program

About the NCLA

In 1992, the Boards of Directors at the Fort Collins, Loveland and Greeley Chambers of Commerce created a regional organization to lead and influence state and federal policy on issues affecting the unique business interests of Northern Colorado. Since then, the NCLA has established itself as the voice for Northern Colorado business and is sought after on issues that affect all of Colorado. In 2005, a regional focus was added and the NCEDC was brought into the NCLA.

The NCLA Board of Directors is comprised of six representatives from each of the three Northern Colorado chambers of commerce, plus the chamber executives and the president and another member of the NCEDC for a total membership of 23.

Online Resources

Visit www.NCLAonline.net to stay abreast of issues important to businesses in Northern Colorado. Sign up for events and newsletters, contact your lawmakers about important issues, find useful links, and get involved in the legislative process.

Visit www.leg.state.co.us to find your elected officials and access other General Assembly resources such as:

- Full Bill Text
- Current Bill Status
- Fiscal Notes/Analysis
- Legislator Contact Information

Visit www.colorado.gov to find out general information about the Governor's administration and other state of Colorado resources.

Visit www.senate.gov and www.house.gov for information on federal legislation or to contact your US senators and representatives.



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For more information about the NCLA,
Visit www.NCLAonline.net